

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1-4, 13, 14 and 27, cancel claims 24-26 and 30 and new claim 37.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of the claims in the application.

Listing of the claims

1. (Currently amended) ~~Biologically~~ A biologically pure bacterial culture of at least one mutant strain of *P. fluorescens*, wherein said strain produces at least 10 g alginate per liter medium.
2. (Currently amended) ~~Biologically~~ The biologically pure bacterial culture of at least one mutant strain of *P. fluorescens* of claim 1, wherein said strain produces at least 10 g alginate per 40-55 g carbon source per liter medium.
3. (Currently amended) ~~Biologically~~ The biologically pure bacterial culture of at least one mutant strain of *P. fluorescens* of claim 1, wherein said strain produces at least 10 g alginate per 50-55 g carbon source per liter medium.
4. (Currently amended) ~~Biologically~~ The biologically pure bacterial culture of at least one mutant strain of *P. fluorescens* of claim 1, wherein said strain produces at least 10 g alginate per 40 g carbon source per liter medium.
5. (Previously presented) A pure mutant strain of *P. fluorescens* selected from the group consisting of the mutant strain Pf201, Pf2012, Pf2013, Pf20118, Pf20137, Pf20118alg1JA, Pf20118algFA, Pf20118AlgLH203R and Pf201MC.

6. (Previously presented) The pure mutant strain of *P. fluorescens* of claim 33, wherein the said mutant produces large amounts of an alginate consisting of mannuronate residues only.
7. (Previously presented) The pure mutant strain of *P. fluorescens* of claim 5, wherein the said mutant strain is selected from the group consisting of: Pf2012, Pf2013, Pf20118, and Pf20137.
8. (Previously presented) The pure mutant strain of *P. fluorescens* of claim 33, wherein the said mutant produces alginate having a defined guluronate residue (G)-content between 0 and 30%.
9. (Previously presented) The pure mutant strain of *P. fluorescens* of claim 33, wherein the said mutant produces alginate without, or with a reduced number of O-acetyl groups.
10. (Previously presented) The pure mutant strain of *P. fluorescens* of claim 5, wherein the said mutant strain is selected from the group consisting of: Pf20118algIJA and Pf20118algfΔ.
11. (Previously presented) The pure mutant strain of *P. fluorescens* of claim 33, wherein the said mutant produces alginate with a molecular weight of between 50,000 and 3,000,000 Daltons.
12. (Previously presented) The pure mutant strain of *P. fluorescens* of claim 5, wherein the said mutant strain is Pf20118AlgLH203R.
13. (Currently amended) The pure mutant strain of *P. fluorescens* of claim 33, comprising an alginate biosynthetic operon regulated by an inducible promoter, wherein the

~~inducible promoter is a Pm promoter, different from the naturally occurring promoter, and optionally one or more effector genes.~~

14. (Currently amended) The pure mutant strain of *P. fluorescens* of claim 13, wherein the inducible promoter is a *Pm* promoter, and further comprising ~~the effector gene~~ an *xyIS* gene.

15. (Previously presented) The pure mutant strain of *P. fluorescens* of claim 5, wherein the said mutant strain is Pf201MC.

16-26. (Canceled)

27. (Currently amended) The biologically pure bacterial culture of at least one mutant strain of *P. fluorescens* of claim 1, wherein ~~the~~ mutant strain ~~comprising~~ comprises a mutant gene selected from the group consisting: a mutant *algG* gene, a mutant *algI* gene, a mutant *algJ* gene, a mutant *algL* gene, and a mutant *algF* gene.

28. (Previously presented) The biologically pure bacterial culture of at least one mutant strain of *P. fluorescens* of claim 1, wherein said mutant strain produces large amounts of an alginate consisting of mannuronate residues only.

29. (Previously presented) The biologically pure bacterial culture of at least one mutant strain of *P. fluorescens* of claim 1, wherein said mutant strain produces alginate containing about 30% or fewer guluronic acid residues.

30. (Cancel)

31. (Previously presented) The biologically pure bacterial culture of at least one mutant strain of *P. fluorescens* of claim 1, wherein said mutant strain produces alginate with a molecular weight of between 50,000 and 3,000,000 Daltons.
32. (Previously presented) The biologically pure bacterial culture of at least one mutant strain of *P. fluorescens* of claim 1, wherein said mutant strain is selected from the group consisting of the mutant strain Pf201, Pf2012, Pf2013, Pf20118, Pf20137, Pf20118algJΔ, Pf20118algFΔ, Pf20118AlgLH203R and Pf201MC.
33. (Previously presented) A pure mutant strain of *P. fluorescens* which produces at least 10 g alginate per liter medium.
34. (Previously presented) The pure mutant strain of *P. fluorescens* of claim 33, wherein said mutant strain produces at least 10 g alginate per 40-55 g carbon source per liter medium.
35. (Previously presented) The pure mutant strain of *P. fluorescens* of claim 33, wherein said mutant strain produces at least 10 g alginate per 50-55 g carbon source per liter medium.
36. (Previously Presented) The pure mutant strain of *P. fluorescens* of claim 33, wherein said mutant strain produces at least 10 g alginate per 40 g carbon source per liter medium.
37. (New) The pure mutant strain of *P. fluorescens* of claim 14, wherein the inducible promoter is a *Pm* promoter from *Pseudomonas putida* TOL plasmid.